



Conservation Successes – November 2003

Senior Wellness & Transportation Diversity in Texas Gem of the Hills Senior Citizens Trail

Blanco County, TX (November 2003) - The Gem of the Hills Senior Citizens Community Center, in cooperation with the Citizens' Assembly of Blanco County Wheels & Feet Task Force, celebrated the opening of a new multi-use trail. The trail will provide increased opportunities for wellness activities for seniors and will make up the first segment of some 18 miles of trails planned for the City of Blanco, Texas. The Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Program designed and provided construction consultation for the dual-loop trail which includes areas for nature enjoyment, bird watching, and a variety of hiking activities for senior citizens and the local community intended to attract more people into an active lifestyle. The larger trail network will provide alternative transportation opportunities for school children, shoppers, commuters, and tourists throughout the scenic Hill Country community, and will be fully coordinated with a countywide trails plan. For more information, please contact Steve Bonner, Community Planner, RTCA, at steve_bonner@nps.gov or 512-916-5163.



Surplus Coast Guard Light Tower Becomes New Community Park Community obtains beach access and town symbol



Caswell Beach, NC (July 23, 2003) – The National Park Service's Federal Lands to Parks program facilitated the transfer, at no cost, of a 5.71-acre parcel containing an active Coast Guard light tower to the Town of Caswell Beach. Overlooking the Atlantic Ocean, the Oak Island Light Tower provided safe passage into the Cape Fear River and Wilmington Harbor for almost 50 years. Located on an offshore barrier island, the parcel will be used for interpretation of the light tower, their town symbol, and for walking trails through the sand dunes out to the Atlantic Ocean beachfront. NPS Federal Lands to Parks staff negotiated the transfer. For more information, please contact Bill Huie, Federal Lands to Parks Program Manager, at bill_huie@nps.gov or 404-562-3175.

Take a 30-Mile Walk!

Dedication marks end of the Monon Trail, capping eight years of work

Indianapolis, IN (October 22, 2003) - Indianapolis-area residents can now plan 30-mile walks, runs, or bike rides without ever leaving the Monon Trail as the last 3.5 mile section that ends in downtown Indianapolis was officially opened! The Monon Trail, a reclaimed rail line right-of-way now extends 15.5 miles from downtown Indianapolis north to the city of Carmel.

The Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) program has provided assistance to Indianapolis Parks and Recreation since 1993, participating in the development of the Indianapolis Greenways Plan that includes over 170 miles of connected greenways and trails through the city. RTCA assistance includes facilitation of public meetings and guidance in a wide variety of areas from funding to construction to operation and maintenance. With the completion of the Monon, work now begins to develop the Cultural Trail network that will link the Monon across town to the White River Greenway with a series of dedicated bike and pedestrian routes. For more information, please contact Rory Robinson at rory_robinson@nps.gov or 330-657-2951.

The Most Exciting Event in 25 Years!

Western Reserve Greenway opened in Trumbull County



Trumbull County, OH (November 10, 2003) - Described as the most exciting event for Trumbull County parks in 25 years, 7.1 miles of the Western Reserve Greenway were opened at the Sunside Trailhead in Champion Township. When complete, the Western Reserve Greenway will be a major linkage for the Great Ohio Lake to River Greenway which connects Lake Erie to the Ohio River across 100-miles of eastern Ohio countryside. The Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) program worked with project partners to help solidify public support for the project and connect partners along the

Great Ohio Lake to River Greenway Route. Project partners include the Raymond John Wean Foundation, the Ohio General Assembly, Trumbull County Metropolitan Park Board, Eastgate Regional Council of Governments, Trumbull County Commissioners, and the Ohio Department of Transportation. For more information, please contact Paul Labovitz, RTCA Ohio Project Manager, at paul_labovitz@nps.gov or 330-657-2950

State Trail Conference Attendees Spread Goodwill and Gravel

Alaskan mechanized trail equipment demo helps complete new ADA wildland trail

Anchorage, AK (October 2003) - As a finale to the 2003 Alaska Trails Conference, NPS Alaska - Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) staff coordinated a half day field demonstration of miniature mechanized equipment available for trail improvements. Approximately three dozen conference attendees and local trail advocates enjoyed field briefings and an opportunity to work with staff and equipment from Chugach National Forest, the Bureau of Land Management Anchorage Campbell Tract, RTCA, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough (a nearby local government) and private sector representatives. Participants used the equipment to gravel cap the recently widened non-motorized 'Moose Track Trail.' The boreal forest trail connects a popular BLM/Anchorage School District outdoor science and education center to adjacent Anchorage suburbs. Around 400 linear feet of the six foot wide trail was covered with two to four inches of gravel transported by small ATV belly-dump trailers and raked level by the volunteers in three hours. (The final treatment to achieve accessibility involves mechanical compaction.) For more information, contact Kevin Keeler, Outdoor Recreation Planner, RTCA, at kevin_keeler@nps.gov or 907-644-3589.



National Center for Recreation and Conservation programs:
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Shoreline Greenway Trail Groundbreaking

Volunteers gather with dignitaries to celebrate

East Haven, CT (October 4, 2003) - Members of the Shoreline Greenway Trail broke ground for a 25-mile trail that will connect New Haven Harbor with Hammonasset State Park (in Madison). US Representative Rosa DeLauro joined East Haven Mayor Joseph Maturo and State Senator Len Fasano to congratulate the volunteers on their quick start. For a year, the National Park Service has helped the fledgling organization to mature and grow by helping with incorporation, events, new volunteers, and trail design. Volunteers from Madison, Guilford, Branford, and East Haven are scouting trail corridors and working with landowners, land trusts, and municipalities to identify potential routes. They are also learning environmentally sensitive trail design techniques to accommodate the sensitive shoreline landscape. For more information, contact John Monroe, Outdoor Recreation Planner, at john_monroe@nps.gov or 617-223-5049.



Canal Adventure 2003!

Tunnel Ribbon Cutting with dignitaries on the Towpath Trail

Stark County, OH (October 14, 2003) - A critical link for the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail was completed and dedicated during the Canal Adventure 2003. A new tunnel allowing the Towpath Trail to pass under an active Wheeling & Lake Erie Railroad right of way provides trail users a safe connection along the trail near the Stark and Tuscarawas County border. During the tunnel dedication ceremony, Stark Park Commissioners passed a resolution renaming the Towpath Trail in Stark County after local Congressman Ralph Regula, whose vision for the canal helped the region protect and develop the corridor into a regional greenway and heritage area. Canal Adventure 2003 was a trek by a team of "adventurers" walking, bicycling, canoeing, and riding along the canal corridor. The Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program works with canal corridor partners to implement the vision of connecting the region with a multi-use trail along the 101-mile length of the National Heritage Corridor. For more information, please contact Paul Labovitz, RTCA Ohio Project Manager, at paul_labovitz@nps.gov or 330-657-2950.

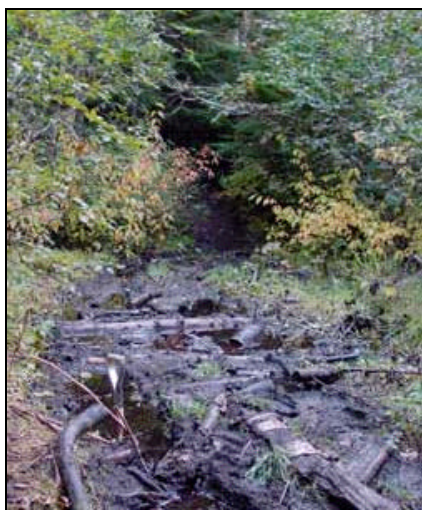
"Trail Hardening" Assistance Demonstrated in Skagway

Partners work to eliminate impassable section of shared trail

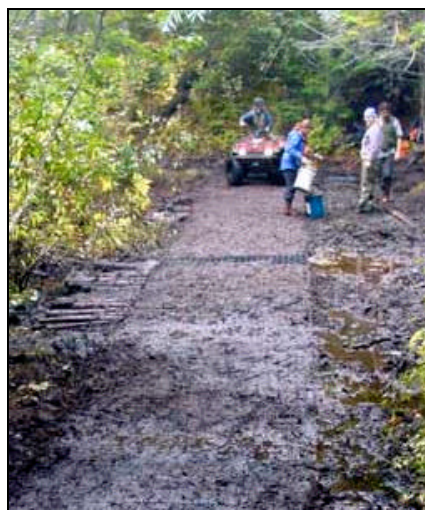
Skagway, AK (September 2003) Several members of the Alaska Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) team joined Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park's trail crew, City Parks and Recreation Committee members, the Skagway Alpine Club, and Alaska Power & Telephone (AP&T) staff to install 70 feet of Geoblock along a boggy stretch of Skagway's trail system. RTCA is currently assisting Skagway with a comprehensive trail inventory, and is also working with the local hydropower utility, AP&T, on the Dewey Lake hydro project relicensing. Ongoing trail assessment work had

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identified problems with a stretch of the Icy Lake Trail where it crosses a poorly-drained, hammocky area. NPS Alaska soil scientist Kevin Meyer joined RTCA project manager Cassie Thomas to bring trail hardening expertise to SE Alaska by installing Geoblock with the crew.



Icy Lake Trail – before.



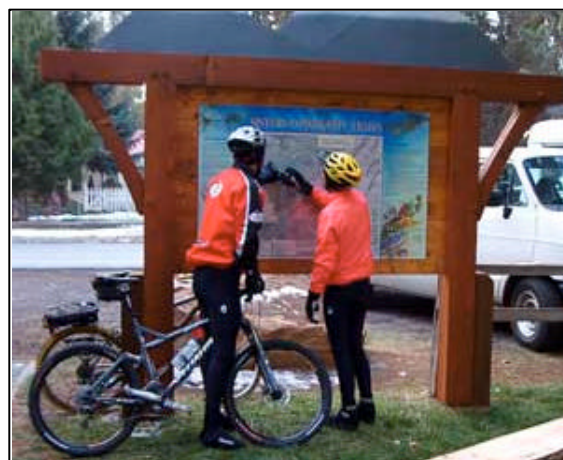
Icy Lake Trail -- after.

Vegetation is expected to regenerate from the roots left beneath the grid, softening the appearance of the hardened area. In conjunction with traditional corduroy, turnpike, and boardwalk, Geoblock gives SE AK trail builders another way to cross the wet areas common in the region. The Icy Lake Trail demo project was deemed a great success, not only for the technology demonstrated, but as yet another example of enthusiastic cooperation between NPS, gateway community leaders, volunteers, and local businesses. For more information, please contact Cassie Thomas, Outdoor Recreation Planner, RTCA Alaska, at cassie_thomas@nps.gov or 907-644-3590.

Sisters Community Trails Celebration

Kiosks at key trailheads show the way to a 146-mile trail system in Central Oregon

Sisters, OR (November 8, 2003) - Trail advocates in Sisters hosted "Discover A Trail Day" to celebrate the installation of two information kiosks designed and built by the Sisters Trails Committee to show existing and proposed trails in the area. Nearly 100 hiking, riding, and cycling enthusiasts gathered at Sisters Village Green to learn more about the 36 proposed trails, and then experience some of them first hand with guided tours on foot, bike, and horse. Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) staff provided two years of technical assistance to the Trails Committee in trail planning, organizational development, and public involvement. Project partners include the Community Action Team of Sisters (CATS), US Forest Service, Sisters School District, Sisters Organization for Activities and Recreation (SOAR), Deschutes County, Deschutes Basin Land Trust, and many dedicated community members. The Trails Committee recently completed the Final Trails Plan and received a \$10,000 grant from Cycle Oregon to complete an Environmental Assessment on public lands that may



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result in opening 30% of the trail system in the next two years. A key public-private neighborhood trail connection to the new high school campus is also currently in negotiation. For more information, please contact Sue Abbott, RTCA Program, Seattle, at sue_abbott@nps.gov or 206-220-4116. A copy of the Trails Plan can be found at www.nps.gov/ccso/rtca.

New Cattail and Northwest Greenways Trails Network Opens

Trails recognized as National Recreation Trails

West Lafayette, IN (October 15, 2003) - Walking, jogging, bicycling, and inline skating in West Lafayette are safer now that the 11.5-mile Cattail and Northwest Greenway Trails are officially open. Citizens joined city, National Park Service, and Purdue University officials to dedicate this network that links three parks within the community to the University and residential areas. As a part of the opening ceremony, NPS Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) program staff presented plaques to Mayor Sonya Margerum and Park Director Joe Payne, designating these trails as National Recreation Trails. RTCA has provided technical assistance to the city of West Lafayette in guidance on routes for trails, funding, and operations over the last 2 years. The opening of these two trails connects a key piece of a network that encircles the city linking neighborhoods to the Wabash River. For more information, please contact Rory Robinson at rory_robinson@nps.gov or at 330-657-2951.

